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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INTELLOFAX 29

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY : Germany (Soviet Zone)

DATE DISTR. 3 July 52

SUBJECT : High Standard Polyvinyl Chloride Produced at I G Farbenindustrie

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE OF INFORMATION :

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Available information indicates that polyvinyl chloride produced on the former I. G. Farben premises in the Leipzig - Dresden area, which is the same place where Buna-N type synthetic rubber is also being produced, is now estimated in excess of 250 tons per month; is equal to that produced in the U. S. and excels that of any other European or U.K. country including polyvinyl chloride produced by Huels of Düsseldorf in Western Germany. All production is offered to Western European markets for payment of Swiss francs or U. S. dollars. It is shipped and consigned to individuals in Antwerp or Amsterdam, and from there it is reoffered to ultimate consumers or jobbers under the brand name of "Igelith".

It has also been indicated that the production of Soviet chemicals meets the high quality standards and specifications set by the former I. G. Chemical Combine, and that many Soviet chemicals are now offered to Latin American and Far Eastern Markets through Belgium and Holland.

1. Q. A verification of the above information regarding production of polyvinyl chloride at the plant in the Leipzig-Dresden area is requested as outlined below:

   (a) The identity of the production and its brand name.
   (b) The exact name and location of the manufacturing plant.
   (c) An evaluation of the quality of the polyvinyl chloride.
   (d) The current monthly rate of polyvinyl chloride production.

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A. (a) Vinyl chloride is a reaction product of one molecule acetylene and one molecule hydrochloric acid. Polymerization is effected either in acetone or methylene chloride solutions, or in emulsion, at a temperature between 100° - 200° C, over a catalyst, the composition of which is not known to me. Polymerization of emulsions of vinyl chloride is the more common process.

Two types of polyvinyl chloride, the production of which apparently has been discontinued, were the Schkopau products, N (low viscosity) and MP. These were mixed polymers of polyvinyl chloride and polyvinyl acetate--produced in liquid form. The trade name of these mixed polymers was "Vinoflex".

"Igelith" or "Igelite" bears the serial name "S 3" or "S 8", the numbers indicating the number of molecules contained in a unit of the polymerized product. "Igelith" is generally produced in powder form, or pressed into tablets.

(b) The above referenced polyvinyl chloride plant in the Leipzig-Dresden area, is the former I. G. synthetic rubber plant at Schkopau. Schkopau is situated 7 km west of Merseburg, and about 14 km west of the Leuna Plant, [redacted] The most important production at Schkopau is still the production of synthetic rubber, Buna and Perbunan. The equipment for the production of synthetic rubber and the near-by Thuringian salt mine make Schkopau a logical place for the production of polyvinyl chloride.

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Another plant in the Soviet Zone at which polyvinyl chloride is produced is the former I G chemical plant at Bitterfeld. I believe that the polyvinyl chloride production at the Schkopau plant is much greater than that at Bitterfeld. (As far as I know, all of the polyvinyl chloride manufactured at Bitterfeld is shipped to the lacquer factory at Wolfen.)

(c) Igelith is not as satisfactory as Vinoflex for the production of lacquer and paint films. Furthermore, pipes made of Igelith have serious deficiencies. At normal temperatures, Igelith is brittle and has a tendency to shrink and break. At higher temperatures, about 80° C, the material becomes soft. At temperatures of 160° - 180° C, Igelith melts; at these temperatures, however, it can be used for welding plastics.

Igelith mixed with a plasticizer has found wide application in the Soviet Zone in the production of shoe soles and heels. The most commonly used plasticizer in shoe sole production is Mesamoll, made from an oil collected from the first fraction in the distillation of oil from the hydrogenation of soft coal. Another plasticizer that has been used in the production of shoe heels is trichresyl phosphate.

Igelite has been used as a film on metal for protection against corrosion, but I did not find it effective for that purpose because it is porous. [redacted] mixed

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it with linseed oil in the following manner:

base coat: Three parts of linseed oil with one part of polyvinyl chloride

first cover coat: Two parts of linseed oil with one part of polyvinyl chloride

outside film: One part of linseed oil with one part of polyvinyl chloride

25X1 [redacted] it was possible to substitute an Alkydal for the linseed oil in all these coatings.)

(d) I have no information regarding the current monthly rate of polyvinyl chloride production.

2. Q. Any additional information available regarding Soviet chemicals or pharmaceuticals shipped to Latin America or Far Eastern countries either directly or through Belgium or Holland or otherwise.

A. The only information I have regarding the shipment of Soviet goods to western countries concerns shipments of asbestos. I know that 6000 tons of first quality asbestos are shipped to Belgium annually, while the Soviet Zone of Germany is allotted only 500 tons of third, fourth or fifth quality asbestos annually.

3. Q. Any information regarding the polyvinyl chloride manufactured by Huels, Düsseldorf, e.g.:

(a) Identity, including brand names
(b) Quality
(c) Distribution
(d) Monthly rate of production
(e) Samples of literature distributed to the trade and medical profession

A. I have no information regarding the production of polyvinyl chloride in the Western Zone of Germany. If the polyvinyl chloride produced at Huels is inferior in quality to that produced at Schkopau, I would ascribe it to the probable shortage of chlorine there. (Chlorine is abundant in the Schkopau area.)

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